

# San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

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**TO:** Design Review Board Members

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**SUBJECT: Alameda Shipways Residential Project at 1100-1250 Marina Village Parkway;  
First Pre-Application Review**  
(For Design Review Board consideration on January 22, 2018)

## Project Summary

**Project Proponents & Property Owners.** Steelwave Acquisitions, LLC and the City of Alameda

**Project Representatives.** Dennis Cavallari and Nicole Bures (Steelwave Acquisitions, LLC, Developer); Justin Semion (WRA, Environmental Consultants); James Bensman (IMA Design, Landscape Architect); Dilip Trivedi (Moffat Nichol, Engineering); Andrew Thomas (City of Alameda)

**Project Site.** The project site is located at 1100-1250 Marina Village Parkway, in the City and County of Alameda and is bounded by the Oakland Estuary to the north and Marina Village Parkway to the south (Exhibits L2 and L3). The project site is part of the larger 1980 Alameda Marina Village master plan development project. To the west is parking for the Marina Village Yacht Harbor marina and an Extended Stay Hotel, which includes a BCDC-required public access pathway (BCDC Permit No. 1979.039.017F). A five-story office building is located to the east of the project site within the larger Marina Village office park complex.

**Existing Conditions.** The approximately 8-acre site was originally developed as a shipbuilding facility around 1916, with the existing structures constructed between 1939 and 1946. The site is comprised of four pile-supported shipways that slope towards the Oakland Estuary. A “head house” building, originally used for machine shops and indoor activities, is located at the south end of each shipway, near the street. Each of the four shipways includes a “craneway” that runs parallel to the shipway and that historically accommodated cranes when the site was used for shipbuilding (Exhibits L4, L7-L8).

The structures on the site are constructed on a reinforced concrete slab supported by a system of pile caps and approximately 6,000 timber pilings driven into the Bay mud. The timber pilings have deteriorated over the past 80 years, resulting in separation of the timber piles from the concrete structure and ongoing settlement of the bay mud beneath the site (Exhibits L5 and L6).

**Existing BCDC Authorization.** The Commission issued a permit for the Alameda Marina Village Master Plan in 1980 (BCDC Permit No. 1979.039.00). The master plan comprised a larger area stretching to the east and west of the project site. Within the proposed project site, the permit authorized construction of a residential development along with required public access areas, including public access in the Bay. The permit was subsequently split into five separate permits in December 2015, as the master plan area was divided among property owners. BCDC Permit No. 1979.039.016B authorized riprap for shoreline treatment and the placement of 31,950 square feet of fill on existing concrete structures and the use 24,630 square feet of existing fill for public access. The permit authorized construction of 57,600 square feet of residential development and 32,950 square feet of waterfront park in the 100-foot shoreline band. The permit required a 15-foot-wide trail on each of the four existing shipway piers, a minimum 100-foot-wide public park, and 10,000 square feet of the welding platform for public access (Exhibit L5). Because the project was not commenced pursuant to the deadlines provided in the permit, BCDC Permit No. 1979.039.016.B expired on May 15, 2014.

**Proposed Project.** The proposed project includes a 329-unit residential development, consisting of four buildings ranging from four to six stories in height, located partially within the 100-foot shoreline band (Exhibits L9 and L10). The residential development would include a private interior driveway, a leasing office, a club and private amenity space, swimming pool, landscaping, and a 511-space parking garage. The project would bring approximately 900 residents to the area.

The project extends across 680 linear feet of shoreline, and includes an approximately 2.4-acre waterfront park for public access and approximately 0.8 acres of auxiliary public access paths to connect the park to Marina Village Parkway (Exhibits L9-13). The public access area would include an open lawn with public art on the former welding platform, four finger piers, two multi-purpose sloped lawn areas, several seating and picnic areas, a children's play area, a kayak rental and storage barn with wash-down area, and a boat dock in the Bay for hand-launch boats and, potentially, water taxi service. The project proponent has described the hand-launch area as a low free-board float, whereas the water taxi float would be of an appropriate elevation to accommodate passenger loading/unloading. Three additional finger piers are proposed within the alignment of the existing craneways to allow for waterfront viewing and fishing. A pathway along the waterfront would provide an extension of the Bay Trail, connecting to adjacent Bay Trail pathways. The boat launch is proposed for a Water Trail site (Exhibits L12 and L17). Although not part of this project, the project proponent has an agreement with the Marina Village Yacht Harbor to construct a public/private restroom and laundry facility in an area immediately to the west of the site (Exhibit L9). Planting, pedestrian-scaled lighting, bicycle racks, wayfinding and interpretive signage is proposed throughout the site. All public access areas are proposed to be barrier-free, and universally accessible.

The existing sheetpile wall at the water's edge adjacent to the Oakland Estuary channel will remain in place to maintain the existing bathymetry between the navigable channel and the project site. Landward of this existing sheetpile wall, the shoreline will be reconstructed with another sheetpile wall and various shoreline stabilizing structures. In between the proposed pile-supported finger piers, the shoreline edge treatment would consist of a stabilized edge, either articulated concrete blocks planted with native shoreline plants, or a retaining wall, depending on the structural requirements of the site. The edge of the former welding platform with the

proposed open lawn steps down to the waterfront providing opportunities for the public to get closer to the water, but not physically access the water. The water areas in the former shipways would be shallow water that would expose tidelands during the daily tidal cycle (Exhibits L11 – L13).

Construction for the project would occur over an estimated 28 months. All existing features, including the 6,000 timber pilings, pile caps, grade beams, the concrete slab, and above-deck structures would be removed. In the Bay, a sheetpile wall would be installed and the existing concrete deck and timber pilings would be removed to reconstruct the shoreline, expanding the water surface area of the Bay. Portions of the existing structure would be reconstructed to create a pile-supported concrete foundation supported by fill within the 100-foot shoreline band to support the waterfront park and the residential development.

After construction, the project proponent's estimate that approximately 14,450 square feet of the site will be located in the Bay, including finger piers, the kayak launch, and a sheetpile wall. Approximately 118,800 square feet of the site would be located in the 100-foot shoreline band, including a portion of the waterfront park and residential development.

**Resilience and Adaptation to Rising Sea Level.** To determine the best estimates of future sea level rise and flooding, the Commission consults the "State of California Sea Level Rise Guidance Document" ("State Guidance") issued in March 2013 by the Ocean Protection Council, which was drafted to help state agencies incorporate future sea-level rise impacts into planning decisions. This document integrates the best available science from the National Research Council's report "Sea-Level Rise for the Coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington" issued in June 2012. The State Guidance provides a range of estimated sea level rise for 2050 and 2100, using 2000 levels as a baseline, and states that, by mid-century, sea level will rise by 4.5 to 24 inches and, by the end-of-century, by 16 to 66 inches—a mean of 16 inches by mid-century and 36 inches by end-of-century.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency ("FEMA"), the current 100-year-flood elevation (BFE) for the project site is 9.6 feet North American Vertical Datum (NAVD88). The design of the project incorporates a sea level rise projection of 36-inches of sea level rise at mid-century, and 66-inches of sea level rise at the end-of-century, which represents the higher range of sea level rise projections as described in the State Guidance. (Exhibit L12). Both of these sea level rise estimates incorporate current base flood elevation for purposes of sea level rise planning.

The proposed public access areas, including the proposed public access and kayak/water taxi piers, would be a minimum of 12.6 feet NAVD88, which is sufficient to accommodate up to 36" of sea level rise above current BFE. The elevation of the residential development would be constructed to approximately 19.6 feet NAVD88, which is 4.5 feet higher than a projection of 66-inches of sea level rise at 2100. (Exhibit L12). The elevation of the new structures is dictated by both sea level rise planning and accommodating the proposed parking garage and utilities. As a result, the proposed public access would require adaptation beyond mid-century. The interface between the proposed public access and the residential development would slope up to accommodate the grade change. Under worst case sea level rise predictions, wave runup during 100 year storm events could result in spray or splash adjacent to the shoreline of the waterfront park during its design life. The project proponent states that "minor adaptations such as a short wall or a berm could be constructed along the edge [to adapt the public access to sea level rise beyond mid-century]."

## Commission Findings, Policies & Guidelines

The Bay Plan **Public Access** policies state, in part, that “...maximum feasible access to and along the waterfront and on any permitted fills should be provided in and through every new development in the Bay or on the shoreline...” and that “[a]ccess to and along the waterfront should be provided by walkways, trails, or other appropriate means and connect to the nearest public thoroughfare where convenient parking or public transportation may be available.” Further, these policies state, in part: improvements should be designed and built to encourage diverse Bay-related activities and movement to and along the shoreline, should permit barrier-free access for persons with disabilities to the maximum feasible extent, should include an ongoing maintenance program, and should be identified with appropriate signs.” Additionally, the policies provide that “[p]ublic access should be sited, designed, managed, and maintained to avoid significant adverse impacts from sea level rise and shoreline flooding,” and that access should be designed consistent with the physical and natural environment.

The Bay Plan **Appearance, Design, and Scenic Views** policies state, in part, that “all bayfront development should be designed to enhance the pleasure of the user or viewer of the Bay” and that “[m]aximum efforts should be made to provide, enhance, or preserve views of the Bay and shoreline, especially from public areas...” Furthermore, “[s]tructures and facilities that do not take advantage or complement the Bay should be located and designed so as not to impact visually on the and shoreline.”

The Commission’s **Shoreline Protection** policies, state, in part, that “[a]dverse impacts to natural resources and public access from new shoreline protection should be avoided. Where significant impacts cannot be avoided mitigation or alternative public access should be provided.”

The Commission’s **Public Access Design Guidelines** state partly that public access should be designed “so that the user is not intimidated nor is the user’s appreciation diminished by large nearby building masses....” Furthermore, “public access improvements should be designed for a wide range of users,” should “provide basic public amenities, such as trails, benches, play opportunities, trash containers, drinking fountains, lighting and restrooms that are designed for different ages, interests and physical abilities,” and should be designed for the weather of the site. The guidelines also state that viewing the Bay is the “most widely enjoyed ‘use’ and projects should be designed to “enhance and dramatize views of the Bay.”

### Board Questions

**The Board's advice and recommendations are sought on the following issues regarding the design of the proposed public access, physical and visual connections, and sea level rise:**

1. Would the proposed project provide adequate, usable, and attractive public space for the public's use and enjoyment of the shoreline? Are there other amenities or that would improve the public's enjoyment and use of the shoreline?
2. Does the site layout provide usable and inviting public spaces that are oriented to the Bay, incorporate unique and special amenities that draw the public to them, create a "sense of place", are safe, and feel public?
3. Are the proposed paths, walkways, and planting areas designed to maximize views and physical connections to and along the shoreline for the public?
4. Are the proposed walkways and trails adequately designed to physically and visually connect to the nearest public thoroughfare and Bay Trail connecting pathways?
5. Is the boat dock and associated amenities designed sufficiently to allow for hand-launched watercraft and water taxi service?
6. Are the other piers sufficiently designed to provide other water-oriented recreation opportunities, both passive and active?
7. Are the shoreline treatment options appropriate for maximizing public access, while both maintaining the structural integrity of the waterfront park and accommodating potential adaptation to sea level rise?
8. Are the public areas appropriately designed to accommodate sea level rise and/or flooding?